

2003 Work Plan

Biomass R&D Technical Advisory Committee

BACKGROUND

The Biomass Technical Advisory Committee, in its advisory capacity, is chartered to provide the following to the Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy and their Points-of-Contact (Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy):

- Advise on technical focus and direction of requests for proposals issued under the Biomass Research and Development Initiative (Initiative); and
- Advise on procedures for reviewing and evaluating proposals.

The Committee shall also:

- Evaluate and perform strategic planning on program activities relating to the Initiative; and
- Facilitate consultations and partnerships among Federal and State agencies, agricultural producers, industry, consumers, the research community, and other interested groups.

Additionally, the Committee shall have the following duties:

- Advise the Points of Contact with respect to the Initiative;
- Review the budgets and development thereof in support of the Initiative;
- Review the requests for proposals under the Initiative;
- Review the process and procedures for the overall Initiative, including the process and procedures for the selection of reviewers and the procedures for evaluation of research proposals under the Initiative;
- Make recommendations in writing to the Biomass Research and Development Board to ensure that:
 - Funds authorized for the Initiative are distributed and used in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the Initiative;
 - The points of contact are funding proposals under this title that are selected on the basis of merit, as determined by an independent panel of scientific and technical peers; and
 - Activities under the Initiative are carried out in accordance with the Biomass Research and Development Act of 2000; and
- For each fiscal year for which funds are made available to carry out the Initiative, provide a report to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture on whether funds appropriated for the Initiative have been distributed and used in a manner that:
 - Is consistent with the purposes described in Section 307(b) of the Act,
 - Uses the set of criteria established under subsection (a)(3); and

- Takes into account any recommendations that have been made by the Advisory Committee.

2003 SCHEDULE, PROCESS, AND PRIORITIES

To date, the Committee's activities have resulted in three major products:

- A preliminary set of recommendations, submitted to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture in December of 2001, on the potential of biomass research and development.
- A Vision document that outlines the far-reaching goals that the Committee would like to see achieved by the biomass industry.
- A series of Roadmap workshops resulting in a Roadmap that outlines research and development pathways in plant sciences, feedstock production, processing and conversion, and other areas necessary to achieve the goals set forth in the Vision.

Now in the third year of its activity and with the above documents, the Committee plans to spend its time in 2003 reviewing the USDA and DOE biomass R&D portfolios and developing a set of recommendations to the federal agencies regarding biomass research and development investments and specific policies to commercialize biomass technologies and feedstocks. The Committee has requested the Departments for information on biomass related R&D activities being funded by the federal government, and the programs where that R&D is being performed. The Committee will evaluate this information in relation to the goals of the Biomass R&D Act as well as compare it against their recommendations in the Vision and the Roadmap. The Committee will make specific recommendations on the direction and processes for future federal investments for biomass research and development activities.

The 2003 budget has been established and the Committee proposes only to review existing Requests for Proposals and any existing guidelines for evaluating proposals. If the Committee has recommendations for improving the guidelines to better align them with the goals and objectives set forth in the Vision and Roadmap, those recommendations will be provided to the Secretaries and Points-of-Contact. The Committee also proposes to review the agencies' plans for implementing Title IX of the Food Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the Farm Bill) and provide recommendations on how those initiatives can best contribute to the realization of the Vision and the implementation of the Roadmap.

For the 2004 budget, the Committee will review requests for proposals and the detailed process for review of the proposals, including the independence of the reviewers. For the 2005 budget the Committee hopes to provide recommendations regarding the size of the budget as well.

The Committee has made substantial progress developing specific policy proposals that will advance the goals and objectives set forth in the Vision and Roadmap. The Committee will continue to work to create consensus-based recommendations regarding policy priorities and strategies for advancing policies with the agencies.

Committee Meetings

For 2003, the full committee will meet in Washington, DC at least quarterly as required by law.

Meetings will be scheduled for one or two days depending on the workload required. Meetings have been tentatively scheduled for the following dates:

**Table 1
Schedule of Meetings**

Date	Purpose
February 24-25, 2003	<p>The Committee will hold a joint meeting with the Biomass R&D Board to review the interagency matrix on biomass research and development activities and to develop a plan for interaction between the Board and the Committee. The Committee will also be provided with the President's FY04 budget request on biomass activities. The Committee will compare the FY03 budget, the President's FY04 budget request, and requests for proposals with the Vision and Roadmap to assess compatibility. The Committee will use this information to make initial advice to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture to be used in the development of the FY05 budget request.</p> <p>The Committee will also make a request to the Departments to provide information that will enable the Committee to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advise on the technical focus and direction of requests for proposals issued under the Initiative; and ▪ Advise on procedures for reviewing and evaluating proposals.
April 10, 2003	<p>The Committee will receive the information requested in January 2003 and review the detailed process for review of the proposals. Based on the FY03 budget authorization and the FY04 budget request for biomass, the Committee will meet to develop recommendations to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture as well as other relevant federal agencies on biomass research and development investments for the FY2005 budget.</p> <p>The Committee will also initiate discussion on how to perform the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitate consultations and partnerships among Federal and State agencies, agricultural producers, industry, consumers, the research community, and other interested groups ("Facilitation").
July 17, 2003	<p>The Committee will meet to refine their recommendations to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture as well as other relevant federal agencies on biomass research and development investments for the FY2005 budget. The Committee will also request the Departments to provide information on progress in each of the areas of the Vision and Roadmap; on successes and failures related to prior biomass research, and the means to assess success and failure. The Committee will assess the data provided by the Departments on progress and on research, and evaluate whether changes in the Vision and/or Roadmap are considered prudent.</p> <p>The Committee will provide the results of its review of the process for soliciting proposals, making awards and measuring the success of biomass R&D. The Committee will also consider developing a plan for Facilitation of consultations and partnerships, if it deems necessary.</p>
September 25, 2003	<p>The Committee will finalize the plan for facilitation of consultations and partnerships.</p> <p>The Committee will hold a joint meeting with the Biomass R&D Board to discuss the</p>

	Committee's recommendations on federal biomass research and development funding as well as strategies for implementing the Biomass Research and Development Initiative.
November 18, 2003	The Committee will meet to finalize their recommendations and to complete their input to the Annual Report to Congress.

2003 DELIVERABLES

In early calendar year 2003, the Committee will be presented with an interagency matrix that details FY03 biomass research and development activities, projects and associated funding across the federal agencies. This information will be provided by the Department of Energy and the Department of Agriculture as well as other federal agencies, as available. A joint meeting will be held between the Committee and the Biomass R&D Board to discuss each agency's activities. The Committee will use this information to provide initial advice to the federal agencies on where adjustments should be made in the current biomass program portfolio as well as biomass research and development funding in the FY05 budget request.

Following its release by the President, the FY04 budget request for biomass activities will also be provided to the Committee

With information on both the FY03 budget authorization and the FY04 budget request, the Committee will then develop detailed recommendations to the federal agencies for future biomass research and development funding. These recommendations will be based on the Committee's analysis of the federal portfolio in biomass and will reflect the Committee's Vision and Roadmap documents.

The Committee will also fulfill its strategic planning duties by meeting with the Biomass R&D Board to provide recommendations for implementing the initiative. This will include an evaluation of the strategy implemented during the most recent fiscal year and recommendations on the strategy for the upcoming fiscal year. The Committee will evaluate and then advise the Secretaries of its perspective of the Department's processes for determining proposal areas, requesting proposals, making awards and measuring the successes of its R&D efforts.

The Committee will also develop means for fostering consultations and partnerships among Federal and State agencies, agricultural producers, industry, consumers, the research community, and other interested groups with the goal of enhancing the productive use of biomass.

Lastly, the committee will develop its second annual Report to Congress, which accompanies that from the Secretaries, and identifies progress in implementation of the Biomass R&D Act of 2000. This report will include the Committee's recommendations on federal biomass research and development funding as well as any recommendations that the Committee makes to the Biomass R&D Board on strategic planning.

Table 2
Advisory Committee Priorities and Deliverables

Deliverable	Due Date
Initial advice to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture regarding FY05 biomass program budget formulation.	March 2003

Portfolio and opportunity analysis of the Federal biomass activities - Detailed advice to the Secretaries of Energy and Agriculture as well as other relevant federal agencies on biomass research and development investments. Review of process for solicitations, awards and results measurement.	July 2003
Strategy Recommendations - recommendations to the Biomass R&D Board on the strategy for the implementing the initiative. Plan for facilitation of consultations and partnerships.	September 2003
Annual Report – Report on committee activities during the year to include the Committee's recommendations to the federal agencies as well as the R&D Board.	November 2003